

A Message from the Under Secretary of Defense For Acquisition, Technology and Logistics



The importance of a right-sized, high quality, high performing acquisition workforce cannot be overstated. On March 4, 2009, President Obama signed his memo, "Government Contracting," with a mandate for the Federal Government to have sufficient capacity to manage and oversee its contracting process. On April 6, 2009, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates announced his intent and recommendations to change the Department's strategic direction and reform the DOD acquisition process. This heading change includes increasing the size of the organic Defense Acquisition Workforce (DAW) by 20,000 employees. Our hiring

initiatives are on track, and the acquisition workforce will grow from approximately 127,000 to 147,000 by 2015. This will return the acquisition workforce to above the 1998 level of approximately 146,000. About half, or 10,000 of the planned growth will result from in-sourcing selected acquisition support services and performing these services with government employees. This will help us to better address inherently governmental functions and ensure we have appropriate oversight of all acquisition activities. It will also improve the balance between our government workforce and contractor support personnel who will continue to play a vital role on the Department's Total Force team. To successfully accomplish the acquisition mission we will place greater emphasis on a high quality workforce having the right competencies and skill sets, at the right places at the right time.

While our hiring initiatives are on track, the Department must act now on its strategy to increase its acquisition management, technical and business capability and capacity to manage and oversee the acquisition process - from start to finish. Accordingly, I have made sustaining a high quality, high performing workforce one of my top priorities. The key to improving acquisition outcomes is our people. DOD depends on a diverse and knowledge-based workforce comprised of acquisition, technology, and logistics professionals. They are our greatest asset and are critical to our success. I have re-established the Defense Acquisition Workforce Senior Steering Board to sharpen our strategic focus and provide a forum for the acquisition senior leadership team to thoughtfully deliberate and advance our acquisition workforce initiatives. This dynamic and integrated process will build upon a highly effective, performance-based culture that attracts, retains, motivates, and rewards high-performing, top quality workforce members. We will build on our current accomplishments taking full advantage of existing authorities.

Finally, a very concerned Congress has been actively involved in shaping and supporting the Department's workforce initiatives. Their support with funding, expedited hiring authority, workforce recognition and incentives, and other human capital legislation has been very important for our current success. I appreciate the Congress' support and will work with each member as we continue to deploy and evolve our workforce strategy. Complete success will not be achieved overnight. As Secretary Gates has stated, "there are no silver bullets." This plan builds upon our accomplishments and positions the DOD acquisition workforce for the future. Emanating from Secretary Gates' overall strategic vision, this plan is based on the principles of leadership alignment, Service-unique force planning, and integrated component sharing and collaboration. I solicit all stakeholder support, and look forward to working together as we grow, re-shape and rebalance the workforce with special emphasis on improving workforce quality.


Ashton B. Carter